

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A surface inspection apparatus for detecting foreign matter and the like on a surface of a substrate by projecting and scanning laser beams to the surface of the substrate, comprising a light source unit for projecting two or more laser beams, and a projecting optical system for converging the laser beams so that the two or more laser beams are aligned in a row in a direction perpendicularly crossing the scanning direction at a projecting point on the substrate.

2. A surface inspection apparatus according to claim 1, wherein each laser beam is superimposed on the adjacent laser beam at the projecting point on the surface of the substrate, and light intensity of the superimposed portion is approximately 50% or more with respect to the maximum value.

3. A surface inspection apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said two or more laser beams are emitted from two or more light emitting sources.

4. A surface inspection apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said two or more laser beams are obtained by splitting a laser beam emitted from a single light emitting source to two or more laser beams by an optical means.

5. A surface inspection apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said two or more laser beams emitted from said two or more light emitting sources are guided by optical fibers respectively, and exit ends of the optical fibers are arranged in parallel to each other along a straight line.

6. A surface inspection apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the exit ends of the optical fibers are arranged in two rows.